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**READING RELEASES ITS DRAFT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN**  
***The Plan Will Guide The Town's Economic Development Efforts For Next Six Years***

The Town of Reading has recently released a draft of its new Economic Development Action Plan. The Plan is available on the front page of the Town's website [www.readingma.gov](http://www.readingma.gov) and residents, businesses and other stakeholders are asked to provide their input on the Plan.

The Action Plan was made possible by a \$15,000 Priority Development Fund Grant awarded by the Commonwealth, and a partnership with Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). Over the past year, several public forums were held including visioning sessions and public participation in the planning process. The feedback garnered from the public forums was incorporated into the Plan. Development programming, including density, building height, open space areas, and building and site designs were all part of the input derived from the public forums.

"The release of this Action Plan is an important achievement for the Town of Reading," said Reading Town Manager Bob LeLacheur. "Economic development is something that we take very seriously and it is helpful to have a roadmap for Reading's economic future. I would like to thank the Commonwealth for providing us with the grant, and the MAPC and town staff for all of their hard work on this effort."

The Action Plan focuses on four priority development areas in Reading including: Downtown (expansion of existing Smart Growth District), South Main Street(Route 28 corridor from Ash Street to South Street), New Crossing Road Redevelopment District (behind RMLD) and 1 General Way (retail complex including Market Basket). The Plan identifies underutilized areas that could be redeveloped to include more retail, office, creative/flex space, mixed use and residential property.

The Plan includes a market study which identifies growth opportunities for the four priority development areas. Reading's cultural, environmental and transportation assets are highlighted in the Plan, as well as residential and commercial growth opportunities.

The Action Plan also highlights several potential partners who can assist with implementation. Reading's Planning Division, along with its Board of Selectmen and Community Planning and Development Commission will work with groups like the Reading/North Reading Chamber of Commerce, Shop The Block, and Cultural Connections Reading to steward the implementation of the Action Plan. Public/Private Economic Partnerships are encouraged as well. The Plan also includes a timeline for strategies and action.

"This has been a very productive planning effort that has focused on providing opportunities for residents and businesses to have a say on the future of the community. For those who couldn't make it to the public forums there still is time to provide input on the draft Action Plan that will culminate with a presentation to the Board of Selectmen on December 1, 2015," said Assistant Town Manager, Jean Delios, who spearheaded the Town's effort. "Like many other communities, Reading recognizes that it has to proactively plan for economic growth, and having a meaningful Action Plan will serve as a guide for the future."

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